



Join Us In Measuring Progress

A Monthly
Assessment Newsletter
April 2004

Assessment for Learning

Montana Comprehensive Assessment System (MontCAS)

Tentative Statewide Testing Windows for Spring 2005

The tentative spring 2005 testing windows for MontCAS, Phases 1 and 2 are:

Phase 1, the Iowa Tests: March 7 - March 25, 2005

Phase 2, the CRT: March 21 - April 15, 2005

To accommodate the variety of spring breaks, in this tentative schedule, the CRT testing window is four weeks and overlaps the Iowa Tests window.



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MontCAS Phase 1, The Iowa Tests

Iowa Answer Documents Returned—Big Success

Thank you Test Coordinators for returning all answer documents by April 15 or earlier. Because of your great work, many of you have already received your results. If answer documents are received in scoreable condition and packaged correctly, Riverside can check them in and begin scoring. Results are shipped to districts 15 working days after Riverside receives the answer documents in scoreable condition.

Please use the discrepancy form provided by Riverside with your printed reports to report any problems to Riverside **no later than May 12, 2004**. Resolution of problems reported after May 12 will not be reflected in state results. As soon as the problems have been resolved, the state reports can be calculated. Once the state results are calculated, districts will receive the customized skills reports, the results that are aligned to state content standards.

The *2004 Montana Iowa Tests Interpretive Guide* is online: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/assessment/nrt.html>.

MontCAS Phase 2, the CRT

Teachers Needed for Standard Setting for the CRT and the CRT-Alternate

The Office of Public Instruction needs special education and regular education teachers of reading and math with recent or current experience in grades 4, 8, and 10 to participate in standard setting for the criterion-referenced test (CRT) and the criterion-referenced test alternate (CRT-Alternate).

Standard setting is the process of setting cut scores for proficiency levels. In Montana, those levels are novice, nearing proficiency, proficient, and advanced. Once the cut scores are established, Measured Progress (the testing contractor) can begin compiling and printing the test results in reports to districts and schools. Classroom teachers are key in standard setting and will comprise the largest group in the process. It is vital that participants represent the diversity of the Montana population in location, size of school and community, and subgroup. Grade 10 and special education teachers especially are encouraged to apply.

The standard setting workshops will be held in Helena June 28 - July 1.

Session 1: June 28-29, Standard setting for the CRT

Session 2: June 30-July 1, Standard setting for the CRT-Alternate

Honoraria of \$100 per two-day session and renewal units will be offered as well as mileage, meal, and lodging expenses. If the price of a plane ticket is equal to or less than mileage expenses, airfare will be covered.

In March, principals and district administrators received information and applications to distribute in their schools and districts. In addition, information was included in the March 2004 JUMP newsletter on page 5, <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/assessment/newsletters/March2004AssessmtNews.pdf>.

Direct links to the information and the application:

Information: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Assessment/Invitation3.pdf>

Application: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Assessment/AppforStandardSe.pdf>

Please encourage teachers to apply for this opportunity. The final deadline to fax applications to Measured Progress is April 30, 2004.



Jules Waber, Powell County Superintendent, surveys the boxes of materials he received from Measured Progress for the criterion-referenced test (CRT). Each grade for each system is packed separately to facilitate speed when materials are returned to Measured Progress. Box sizes are part of a contract with UPS. Thanks to everyone for working with the boxes, the materials, Measured Progress, and the OPI to learn a new system this year.

Frequent Calls about the CRT

Thank you Test Coordinators for attending to detail, asking important questions, and staying in contact during the CRT preparation, testing, and materials return windows. Your comments about the manuals and instructions are important in planning revisions for the 2005 CRT.

The two most commonly asked questions concerned the student response booklets and short answer questions.

➤ Question

When students mark in the student response booklet (SRB), their marks transfer to another page. How will this affect scoring?

Answer

According to Measured Progress, this is not a problem. Their scanners pick up the original pencil marks not the “carbon” ones. Measured Progress uses quality paper and has \$50,000 scanners that are very sensitive. Scanning has started, and Measured Progress has not experienced any problems.

➤ Question

The instructions for the math short answer gridding/bubbling were very confusing. How will this affect student scores?

Answer

Students will not be marked wrong for incorrect short-answer gridding. All short-answer “work spaces” and answer grids will be hand-scored.

CRT Results

➤ CRT results will be the basis for the 2004 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

➤ Because this is the first year of the CRT administration, results and AYP will be delayed.

- **June 2004**

Sample CRT report shells will be online by the end of June
Details will be in the June *JUMP*

- **September 2004**

Tentative date for schools and districts to receive CRT results

- **January 2005**

Tentative date for AYP determinations

Opportunities for Math Teachers

May 15, 2004: TI-84+Graphing Calculator Workshop for Math Teachers (Grades 8-12)

- Presented by The Montana Learning Center at Canyon Ferry
- Saturday, May 15, 2004
- 9:30 am - 2:00 pm
- \$40, payable to the Montana Science Institute
 - o Teachers wishing to stay overnight in the dorms on Friday or Saturday night may stay at a special rate of \$35 per night.
 - o Checks are payable to the Montana Science Institute.
- Registration:
 - o msi@mt-science.org, orrseitz@metnet.state.mt.us OR
 - o Carol at the Montana Learning Center at Canyon Ferry Lake [(406) 475-3638].
 - o **Send the following information:** Name, Address, School, Phone, Email.

June 29 - July 2, 2004: Middle School Geometry (Grades 5-8)

- Sponsored by Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)
- Tuesday - Friday, June 29 - July 2
- \$350 for MCTM members and \$375 for non-members
- Registration
 - o Jim Hamling
1110 W. Water
Lewistown, MT 59457 OR
 - o Email: hamling@tein.net
 - o **Send the following information:** Name, Home and School Address, Phone, and Email

For further information, contact:
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